

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 18930 090615Z
ACTION EA-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 18930

STADIS//////////

EA/J PLATT FROM SHERMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, JA
SUBJECT: LABOR-COST SHARING

REF: TOKYO 18739

1. SINCE AL SELIGMANN'S MESSAGE TO YOU TWO DAYS AGO, MATTERS HAVE TAKEN A TURN FOR THE WORSE. WE HELD UP SENDING YOU THE PROMISED TELEGRAMS DETAILING SOME OF THE ROOTS OF OUR TROUBLE, FIRST BECAUSE WE HAVE BEEN ASSURED EVERY HOUR ON THE HOUR THAT WE WERE ABOUT TO BET A USFJ CLEARANCE ON THEM, AND, SECOND, BECAUSE WE SEEMED FOR A BRIEF MOMENT YESTERDAY TO BE ON THE VERGE OF A BREAK-THROUGH. (THE MESSAGES HAVE NOW BEEN CLEARED AND ARE ON THE WAY.)

2. HAVING BEEN ADVISED BY USFJ INFORMALLY THAT THE REAL HANG-UP WAS THE REFERENCE IN PARA 2 OF THE AGREED REPORT TO IMPLEMENTING FUTURE WAGE INCREASES "IN A SIMILAR MANNER" AS IN 1977, IN A PRIVATE SESSION WITH KITAMURA DEC. 7 (STAGED WITH THE UNDERSTANDING OF USFJ AND THE SERVICE LABOR PEOPLE) AL AND BILL BREER WORKED OUT
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TWO POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES FOR THAT PARAGRAPH:

(A) QUOTE 2. WITH FULL REGARD FOR THE WELFARE OF THE EMPLOYEES, THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AGREES WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN THAT WITHOUT LOWERING EXISTING WAGES OR OTHER WORKING CONDITIONS, THE USFJ EMPLOYEES WAGE REVISION WILL BE IMPLEMENTED SMOOTHLY FOR 1977 AT THE

SAME TIME AND IN THE SAME PROPORTION AS THAT FOR NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES. IN THE INTEREST OF GOOD LABOR RELATIONS, THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AGREES WITH THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT THAT IT WILL ENDEAVOR TO IMPLEMENT WITH SIMILAR REGARD THE USFJ WAGE REVISION IN FUTURE YEARS. UNQUOTE. OR (AS SENTENCE TWO)

QUOTE (B) IN THE INTEREST OF GOOD LABOR RELATIONS, THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AGREES WITH THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT THAT, AS IN 1977, IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WAGE REVISION IN FUTURE YEARS WILL BE SOUGHT WITH SIMILAR REGARD. UNQUOTE IT WAS ALSO AGREED TO ADD TO THE END OF THE US ORAL STATEMENT THE FOLLOWING:

BEGIN QUOTE: THE UNITED STATES SIDE WISHES TO CONFIRM THAT THE UNDERSTANDING IN PARAGRAPH 2(W) OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM OF JULY 5, 1976, REMAINS UNCHANGED.

3. THE INITIAL REACTION OF THE SERVICE LABOR PEOPLE TO ALL THIS WAS FAVORABLE, AND WE THOUGHT WE HAD FOUND A HOLE IN THE PAPER BAG. WE HAVE JUST HEARD, HOWEVER, THAT GENERAL LOVING, PRESUMABLY REFLECTING OTHER SERVICE VIEWS AS WELL, HAS TURNED DOWN THIS COMPROMISE, WHICH OBLIGATES US TO NOTHING -- KITAMURA POINTED OUT THAT "ENDEAVOR" OR "DORYKU SHIMASU" IN JAPANESE, "IS A VERY CONVENIENT WAY TO AVOID FUTURE COMMITMENT WHILE GIVING CONFIDENTIAL

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US JAPANESE SOMETHING WE CAN ACCEPT." IN TAKING A HARD LINE, GENERAL LOVING HAS LET IT BE KNOWN THAT AS FAR AS HE IS CONCERNED THE JAPANESE CAN KEEP THEIR 6.1 BILLION. HE IS UNWILLING, HOWEVER, TO OFFER ANY ALTERNATIVE LANGUAGE, FEELING, APPARENTLY, THAT WE OWE THE JAPANESE NOTHING.

4. WE NOW CONFRONT TWO RISKS: (1) THAT TIME WILL RUN OUT ON OBTAINING ANY RELIEF IN THE COMING YEAR; AND, (2) THAT WORD OF THE COMMANDERS' ATTITUDE WILL GET OUT AND SO POISON THE ATMOSPHERE, AROUSING SUSPICIONS OF ULTERIOR MOTIVES, THAT ALL OUR EFFORTS TO DATE WILL GO DOWN THE DRAIN. I SUGGEST THAT YOU CALL THE SITUATION TO MORT ABRAMOWITZ'S ATTENTION URGENTLY, LETTING IT BE KNOWN THAT I HAVE ASKED YOU TO DO SO. YOU MIGHT POINT OUT THAT WE ARE CAUGHT UP IN A VICIOUS SYCLE. THE JAPANESE FEEL THEY NEED TO HAVE SOME SORT OF REFERENCE TO FUTURE YEARS IN THE AGREEMENT. THIS, IN TURN, CAUSES OUR SERVICE PEOPLE TO SAY THEY CANNOT ACCEPT ANY INFERENCE OF SMOOTH IMPLEMENTATION, EVEN AS AN OBJECTIVE TOWARD WHICH WE MIGHT JOINTLY STRIVE, AND TO INSIST ON RECORDING THE RIGHT TO ASK FOR ADDITIONAL RELIEF. WHEN THE US SIDE TAKES THAT POSITION, THE JAPANESE SIDE

BECOMES CONCERNED ABOUT THE DIET AND SOFA INTERPRETATIONS
AND THEY SUSPECT WE WILL REOPEN IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE
THE SAME ISSUES THAT THEY FEEL THE POLITICAL COMPULSION
TO DECLARE CLOSED FOR THE TIME BEING.

5. AT THE MOMENT, MOFA IS DOING ITS BEST TO KEEP DFAA
CALM, AND HAS NOT EVEN MENTIONED THE COMPROMISE LANGUAGE
OF DECEMBER 7 OR ITS TURN-DOWN. MUCH AS I REGRET TO SAY IT
I FEAR WE HAVE JUST ABOUT COME TO THE END OF OUR ROPE,
AND IT WILL TAKE A HEFTY PUSH FROM THE FIVE-SIDED LABRINTH
TO GET THINGS MOVING ON OUR SIDE.
MANSFIELD

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